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THE

DANGERS

OF THE

EDINBURGH REVIEW;

OR A

BRIEF EXPOSURE

OF ITS

PRINCIPLES IN RELIGION,

MORALS AND POLITICS.

IN THREE LETTERS,

ADDRESSED TO ITS READERS.

BY MENTOR.

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LETTER I.

FRIENDS AND COUNTRYMEN,

THE influence which reviews have upon the opinions of great numbers is well known. Many read them who seldom read any of the books which they review; and form their opinions entirely at second hand. In proportion as a Review is impudent, ignorant, or impious, so will be the danger to such readers. They have perhaps neither time nor inclination to read, nor money to buy, many books; but yet they wish to know something of what is published, both for information and amusement; and too soon admit all, or most, to be right and true which their Review tells them. Before they are aware, they are led to adopt its peculiar sentiments, and to catch the spirit and temper in which it is conducted.

The freedom of the press, and the liberty of discussion, which we possess, are not less our rights than our advantages; but the use and exercise of those rights, the purposes to which they are applied,

and the designs which they are employed to promote, need to be carefully watched; lest the infidel, by his insidious arts, should weaken our faith, or relax our moral principles and habits; or the revolutionist should damp our loyalty to our king, and lessen our attachment to the constitution of our country. These very advantages which we enjoy will become the sources of our greatest misery, unless we strenuously oppose every improper application of them. The press may become a source of ignorance and error, as well as of information and truth.

Sensible, therefore, of the evils, as well as of the benefits, resulting from the liberty of the press; and wishing to contribute something to lessen those evils, or at least to guard against them, in the Edinburgh Review, I accuse it of *infidelity* in Religion; *licentiousness* in Morals; and of *seditious and revolutionary principles* in Politicks. These are serious charges; but they shall be supported by evidence drawn from the Review itself. Who they are that conduct it, I know not; whoever they may be who write for it, I fear them not. The cause of Religion, of Morals, and of good Government, requires that its principles should be exposed, and its poisonous effects, if possible, prevented.

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In this letter I shall detail the evidence in proof of their *infidelity* in Religion. Now I take it for granted, that no person, who really believes Christianity to be a divine revelation, and considers it as of the first importance to man, will ever recommend deistical books as fit for a system of education; but the Edinburgh Review is very friendly to books which attack Christianity, and considers it as a prejudice, if you think they are improper for the instruction of youth. Hence (No. 13. p. 94.) it accounts it quite an oddity, and a prejudice, that in a list of historical books recommended to the reading of a young princess, *the name of the historian of the decline and fall of the Roman empire is omitted, without even a hint at his merits.* And who does not know, that Mr. Gibbon, this historian, was an enemy to Christianity? Who does not know, that his history is made a vehicle for conveying every thing he can introduce into it against the Gospel and its followers? And yet it is a mere prejudice in the estimation of the Edinburgh Review, to refuse his admission as a school book! We do not give poison to children, that we may afterwards counteract its efficacy by an antidote; much less then should we imbue their minds with infidel principles before they are able to weigh the evidence for the truth of Christianity. If I were to propose a plan for your children being made infidels, it should be to teach them out of infidel

books, and to instruct them in the art of ridiculing the Gospel. The Edinburgh Reviewers know the plan would be very effectual; and therefore they recommend it. They praise Gibbon, Hume, and Voltaire, because they know that if young people read them, they most probably will be in some degree staggered in their belief of Christianity.

As these Reviewers recommend infidel books; so, in perfect consistency, they despise the Scriptures. "*We shall leave it,*" say they, (No. 13. p. 99.) "*to others to decide, whether the taste of that critic be very good, who prefers the harp of the Jews, to the lyre of the Greeks; and who plucks the laurel from the brow of Homer, to place it on the head of the good king David.*"

No one possessed of due reverence for the Scriptures, would ever have written the above sentence. It is plain the writer preferred Homer to David; the celebration of the dire effects of Achille's wrath, to the celebration of the greatness and majesty of the Almighty: it is plain he thought heathen poetry, which is full of idolatry, obscenity, and nonsense, was to be preferred to the Jewish, which is pure and good; at once calculated to enlarge our views of the true God, and to improve our dispositions and morals.

Christians

Christians consider the Scriptures as surpassing all other books, not only in the importance of their information and doctrines, but also in the true sublime; and in this opinion they are supported by every principle of true taste and sound criticism, and by the authority of the best judges and most elegant writers. But the Edinburgh Review, like its worthy predecessor, Thomas Paine, endeavours to lessen that respect which we ought ever to feel for the Scriptures; well knowing, that when that is accomplished, it has paved the way for the disregard of the truths which they contain. The taste of that critic is good, who prefers the harp of the Jews to the lyre of the Greeks, and the Edinburgh Review itself shall prove it; for though in general it serves the cause of infidelty, yet sometimes a sentence occurs of an opposite nature. In No. 14, p. 324, they say, *the Hebrew Scriptures are confessedly the great repositories of the poetical sublime.*——AFTER *the Hebrew poets come Homer, Æschylus, Shakspeare, and Milton.*

Here then we have two very opposite opinions delivered in this same Review upon the same subject. The former has the spirit of the work in general; the latter shews its inconsistency with itself, and points out the necessity of not giving up our judgment to its general dogmas. Its principles

in criticism are no more to be trusted than in religion.

And as the Edinburgh Reviewers despise the Scriptures, so of course they reject their doctrines. "*We do not,*," say they, (No. 14. p. 418 & 419.) "*know the designs of the Creator in the construction of the universe, or the ultimate destination of man.——The idea of its being our duty to co-operate with the designs of Providence,——we think the most impious presumption.*" Now Christians do know the ultimate destination of man; they know that he will arise at the last day from the dead, and will be either eternally happy or miserable. Infidels do not know this; they have not the means of ascertaining it; but Christianity has revealed it, and to none but an infidel can there be any doubt upon the subject. Christians know, they must work out their salvation with fear and trembling; though it is God that worketh in them, both to will and to do what is good. But practical piety is an impious thing with the Edinburgh Review; it is quite presumption to co-operate with the designs of Providence; i. e. though Providence has designed us to live holy in this world, and happy hereafter, yet it is quite presumption to take any pains about either. How opposite this is to every principle of divine revelation, needs not be stated;

stated; it is worse than heathenism itself. It strikes at the root of every practical principle, both in morals and religion; and leaves man to absolute fatalism, or total indifference of moral conduct.

Another mark by which this Review shews its infidelity, is its great admiration of infidels. Mr. Hume is called by these Reviewers, (No. 13. p. 94.) "*our great Scottish philosopher;*" and in No. 24, p. 276, he is spoken of as a man of "*unrivalled sagacity,*" and of "*natural benevolence.*" Voltaire and Gibbon come next after him in their estimation; these three authors are their general theme of approbation, the oracles to which they generally refer when they wish to give a side thrust at Christianity. Mr. Hume was of such "unrivalled sagacity," that the Gospel with him was a cunningly devised fable; and his "natural benevolence" was so great, that he did all he could to make men reject and despise the hopes and consolation of Revelation. Admitting that his talents were what they represent them, a thing by no means to be granted, yet surely no friend to Christianity would take such pains to extol its professed enemy. If the Gospel be true, which in this letter I take for granted, it must be of infinitely greater importance to us than the writings of these men; writings, whose general aim is to undermine or ridicule religion. And how a friend

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to Christianity can be so zealous in praising its avowed opposers, is inconceivable.

Where there is a similarity of principles and dispositions, we must be disposed to praise; men do not speak well of what is opposite to their fixed principles and opinions, but of that which accords with them; and hence it is, that Hume, Voltaire, and Gibbon, are so often quoted in terms of respect and praise by the Edinburgh Reviewers.

But so utterly regardless are these men of Christianity, that they scruple not to call (No. 24. p. 357.) Plato, Zeno, and Leibnitz, the "*sublimest teachers of moral wisdom.*"

Now believers in the Gospel think that Jesus Christ is the sublimest teacher of moral wisdom. And in this sentiment they are supported by the authority even of infidels themselves; many of whom have been obliged to acknowledge, that no morality could bear a comparison with that of the Gospel, nor any moral teacher with our Saviour. But with the Edinburgh Reviewers any thing is better than the Gospel; ancient heathenism, or modern infidelity, are much more worthy of *their* praise and admiration. A sincere Christian will always keep the Gospel and its founder *first* in his estimation;

mation; and though he may admire the works of Plato, Xenophon, or Cicero, yet he will think them far, very far, inferior to the instructions delivered by Jesus Christ. A believer in the Gospel must be decided in his preference of it before all other things. What heathens may have taught, he considers as wanting in authority and purity; what the Gospel teaches he considers as enforced by infinite obligations, and perfect in its principles and tendency. With him all moral teachers are as nothing, compared with Him who founded the Gospel of peace and salvation. But not so with the Edinburgh Review; Christianity with it is not worth alluding to, except as an occasion of scorn either against itself or its ministers.

I shall only trouble you with one more instance of the infidelity of this Review; and that is, its confounding of all moral distinction, so far as Christianity is the standard of moral good and evil.

In No. 14, p. 432, these Reviewers state it as Mr. Forsyth's doctrine, in his work upon the Principles of Moral Science, that "*there is no moral evil, and no guilt—in the eye of the Deity.*" Of this doctrine they say, "*to many* it *will appear very monstrous and immoral; and which, we think, propounded with improper confidence.*" Now the obvious inference from this is, that this doctrine

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may be propounded, providing it is not done very dogmatically; that it is a thing about which a man may have doubts. But no Christian can have any doubts upon this subject. He is assured that there is moral good and evil in the eye of the Deity; that sin is offensive to him, and holiness is pleasing. Of the reasoning by which Mr. Forsyth endeavours to reconcile this doctrine "with the subsistence of moral distinctions among mankind," they say, "*We do not mean to hold out this reasoning as* ALTOGETHER *unexceptionable or satisfactory; but it is boldly and strongly urged.*" And is not this to say, that such a doctrine may be supported by reasons which have *some* satisfaction in them? But a man who believes the Gospel, cannot admit such reasons to weigh with him for a moment: they are in opposition to every page of holy writ; and therefore he brands both them, and the doctrine they are meant to support, with marks of his greatest displeasure. But on these kind of subjects the Edinburgh Review is very tender and forbearing; and though it does not say such doctrines are true, yet it speaks of them as *possibly* true. It follows its oracle, Hume, whose great aim was to destroy all moral distinction.

But this charge may be still more particularly proved, by its calling Mr. Fox (No. 24. p. 361.) a *good man.* These reviewers may be allowed to call

call him a great man, though few, twenty years hence, will allow *that:* but by what law, by what standard of morals, can *he* be called a *good man?* Does the Gospel allow gamesters to be good? Does it call those good who *keep?* Or does it admit those to be good, who care little or nothing about itself? The Christian can admit no man to the character of *good,* who lives in the practice of any one sin; or who does not sincerely repent of it, and forsake it. To do otherwise, would be to confound all scriptural and moral distinctions; and therefore he never will admit evil to be called good, or good, evil. Had these reviewers any regard for what the Gospel determines to be good, they would never have applied the appellation to a man, whose conduct could never bear to be measured by its standard. But they labour to subvert all those distinctions which Christianity insists upon; and hence, if possible, to weaken your attachment to the Gospel, and your regard for its laws and authority.

This, my Countrymen, is the evidence I bring, for the conviction of this Review, of infidelity in Religion. It is friendly to deistical books;—it despises the Scriptures;—it despises practical piety;—it admires infidels, and even heathens, before Christ;—and it labours to subvert the distinctions, the eternal difference between good and evil.

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The evidence I have produced, are but a few gleanings from a large crop of the same kind. The bulk of the work is of this description; and though an occasional article may be written of an opposite tendency, yet the general character of it is infidel.

I am your very devoted Servant,

MENTOR.

LETTER

LETTER II.

FRIENDS AND COUNTRYMEN,

IT may be laid down as a general rule, that those, who despise or reject the Gospel, will not be men of very strict moral principles and practice. Morality has no sufficient foundation to rest upon if Christianity be discarded; and though human obligations may tend in some degree to restrain men; yet, if you take away religion, you will find their efficacy very little. Now, as we have proved the infidelity of the Edinburgh Review in religion, we shall find, as a necessary consequence, that it is *licentious* in morals. But before I proceed to produce my evidence drawn from itself, I must premise, that I admit of no standard of morals but the Christian; and that I consider every principle in morals, which is contradictory to the precepts of the Gospel, as false.

Now no man of strict moral principles can speak of vitious and lewd books but with reprehension: but

but the Edinburgh Reviewers speak of Voltaire's *Candide*, one of the most obscene books, as a work which afforded them much pleasure. In (No. xiii. p. 99.) they say, "*A little book lay near us. We opened it, and had not read a page of Candide, before we recollected that we were still in the same world, where——we could yet turn with* PLEASURE *to the works of Voltaire, and admire his genius, and delight in his wit.*" And what was the work which delighted them so much? Candide; a work whose great object was to ridicule a Providence, and which abounds with the most lewd and licentious instances and descriptions. It is true, they say, that while they were delighted with his wit, they lamented the infatuation of his infidelity: but how a Christian who takes upon him to instruct others, can particularly admire such works as Candide, and by his praise of them recommend them, is not very easy to be explained. A man of strict moral principles would reprobate them in the strongest terms; he would not permit his admiration of their wit to lead him to say any thing of them which would tend to promote their circulation. But Voltaire is a great favourite with the Edinburgh Reviewers; and as men are generally known by their company, and their principles by those whom they chiefly admire, it is but fair to infer, that as was Voltaire, so are the Edinburgh Reviewers. No elegance of style, nor fertility of imagination,

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nor brilliancy of wit, can ever compensate for impurity, or laxity of moral principles; but the Edinburgh Reviewers can admire and be pleased with a work which no author ought ever to mention but with the severest reprehension.

As the Scriptures were dictated by the spirit of truth, and contain the doctrines and precepts which a Christian thinks himself bound to believe and practise, it must follow, that he will use scriptural phrases with deference and modesty. He will not lightly and irreverently make use of scriptural expressions. But the Edinburgh Reviewers consider the scriptures, or at least treat them, as a jest book; if they wish to be more sarcastic than usual, it is generally done at the expence of a scripture quotation, or by the introduction of some expression from holy writ. In (No. 4. p. 493.) they introduce in a ridiculous point of view, the phrase "*clean and unclean;*" nor can one read a number, or at most but very few, in which they do not insult the scriptures by ridiculous applications of them. And it is easy to see why they do this; it is to take off our reverence for them, and by imperceptible degrees prepare us for the utter disregard of them. Ridicule is not the test of truth; but it may be employed to disparage it: the Edinburgh Reviewers know this; and therefore they ridicule in scripture

expressions, that they may disparage both the scriptures, and the authors whom they review.

But so licentious are these Reviewers in morals, that *piety* is with them quite a subject of scorn and contempt. In (No. 19. p. 172.) the expression "*pious noblemen*" is applied with the utmost derision and contempt; as if piety in a nobleman only deserved to be laughed at. "*Pious churchmen*" and "*orthodox nobility*" are the scornful epithets they apply to those who supported and received into their company Dr. Beattie, the great opponent of Hume their oracle. And in (No. 19. p. 177.) they even scoff at the cause of morality and truth altogether, by contemptuously calling it "*the good cause;*" and books which prove, that truth is immutable, and that there is no wisdom in scepticism and infidelity, are in contempt styled, (p. 198.) "*meritorious performances, by which youthful minds are to be purified and invigorated.*" Throughout the whole of their review of Dr. Beattie's life by Sir Wm Forbes, they shew the most rancorous hatred against him, and an entire contempt for morality and truth. Dr. Beattie opposed Hume because his writings tend to subvert every principle in Christian morals; the Edinburgh Review opposes Dr. Beattie because his writings tend to maintain and support Christian morals, and to confute the pernicious errors of its most beloved author Hume.

Hume. Dr. Beattie wrote his essay on truth professedly in support of religion and morality; no friend, therefore, to one or the other, would represent the book as they do, as composed of such "*stuff*" as could excite only "*nausea*" or "*compassion*" in a person who had ever thought upon the subject. How the Edinburgh Reviewers come to possess knowledge superior to all the world is yet to be explained; but they ought to know, and do know, that many grown up people, who have left college, though they *say* to the contrary, think the essay on truth a sufficient refutation of Hume's system of scepticism and immorality. The great object of Mr. Hume's metaphysical writings was to weaken every moral obligation, and to destroy all moral distinction; to make it as great a crime, that is none at all, to have a deformity of body as to commit adultery. But this is the writer whom the Edinburgh Review is constantly praising as the sum of all wisdom; and whose antagonists it opposes with an acrimony and virulence proportioned to the ability they have displayed in refuting him. But to write against Hume is unpardonable, especially in matters of religion and morality, both of which he endeavoured to subvert and destroy; and hence the Edinburgh Review, by its attachment to him, shews its own licentious principles.

It is with the greatest difficulty that men are restrained from immorality by every obligation both human and divine; every one, therefore, who endeavours to weaken men's sense of moral duty, adds force to their passions, which at any time are with difficulty restrained, and hence becomes the abettor of vice and folly. But in what way can a person more deliberately or more effectually oppose the cause of virtue, than by recommending authors whose principles tend to destroy every moral tie, and to make man as unaccountable for his actions as the beasts; and as indifferent to his conduct, if he can but gratify his appetites and escape the gallows? This the Edinburgh Review has often done, and this it still continues to do, and hence is sapping the foundation of moral truth and virtue.

As the partiality of the Edinburgh Reviewers is so great for Mr. Hume and his writings, so their contempt of bishops and the clergy, and their insinuations against them, are exactly in his style and manner. One might think his history was written in many parts merely to serve as a battery, from which he might fire his bullets of spleen and contempt against every one who had sustained the clerical office. And this is precisely the case with these Reviewers. They rarely mention a bishop but in scorn; and in (No. 14. p. 399.) speak of it as a thing *quite inconsistent with modern manners* for

for a bishop to attend to a curate in preference to a favourite stage-player. I give this merely as a specimen of their malignity against the ministers of the Gospel; their work abounds with numbers of instances of the same sort, by which they endeavour to traduce the teachers of religion and virtue, and by that means weaken the influence of both. Christian morals teach us to speak evil of no man, and especially of dignities; but these men invert the order of things, and think themselves at liberty to ridicule and despise others in proportion as their rank is high or their office sacred.

But however reproachfully they treat the clergy, atheists and infidels are with them subjects of the highest praise. In (No. 14. p. 365.) D'Alembert, Diderot, Grimm, Rousseau, &c. are styled, with marks of great complacency, *a very brilliant society;* and in (p. 367.) they say, "*This society was, we are willing to believe, the most refined and accomplished that probably was ever assembled upon earth.*" Now is this the character which a strict moralist would give to men, who wondered that any man, who had a claim to good sense, could believe in the existence of a God? Men, who not only thought, but acted, as if they were not responsible for their conduct to any supreme Being, who considered mankind at perfect liberty to gratify their inordinate passions, and to indulge in every lust?

A strict moralist could not speak of such men but with marked disapprobation. No talents for science or conversation would ever induce him to speak in terms of admiration of men who were both speculatively and practically atheists; and who spared no exertions to destroy all regard to virtue and morals. A man of true moral principles must think the cause of virtue infinitely superior to that of politeness and agreeable conversation; he cannot speak of rakes and debauchees with esteem, whatever may be their address. He must consider their vices as destroying all claim to his regard; and though he may be ready to own their powers of conversation, yet he will never make them the subject of his praise.

If virtue be a subject of the highest importance, no author who has a due regard to it, can endeavour to exalt its opposers. Morals are not a subject of mere contemplation; they are practical things, upon which we either are, or ought to be, daily employed. It matters little to the welfare of society that you are able to ascertain the density of the planets, or determine the law of the variation of gravity: but it does most intimately concern society that you be good and faithful husbands; honest and industrious citizens; discrete and sober men. These Reviewers then are traitors to mankind, by lessening men's sense of duty, through their

praises

praises of some of the most immoral men both in principle and conduct that ever lived.

It may then be safely affirmed, that the Edinburgh Review is *licentious* in morals; since it speaks of obscene books and authors with pleasure—since it treats the Scriptures with irreverence—laughs at piety, and ridicules the cause of morals and truth—holds up the clerical character to derision—but passes the highest encomiums upon atheists and debauchees.

I am your very devoted Servant,

MENTOR.

LETTER III.

FRIENDS AND COUNTRYMEN,

THERE is an intimate connection between mens' moral and political principles; those, who can weaken the grounds of moral obligation, will in general be found men of turbulent and seditious principles in society. They will be very loud in their clamour against oppression where there is none, and in their zeal for what they call liberty; but which in reality is anarchy, the worst of all slaveries. They will be very earnest in their outcries against public restrictions, while they, in their private concerns, are generally the most oppressive and tyrannical of men.

This union of licentiousness in morals, and seditious principles in politics, is evident in the Edinburgh Review, which can praise any country but our own, and admire any rulers, but those, who are firm in support of civil government in opposition to revolutionary principles. Now I take it for granted,

granted, that all those, who endeavour to palliate French enormity since the commencement of the French revolution, are friendly to revolutionary principles as applied to this country under its present laws and constitution. And I do this, because throughout the greater part of England, I never met with one, who did not wish for a revolution at home, in proportion as he endeavoured to palliate French enormity.

The Edinburgh Review takes every opportunity it can of palliating the crimes of France, and of lessening the abhorrence of the people of this country against her enormities. Speaking of the general state of warfare in Europe, in their number for April, 1806, page 13, they say; "*We have ceased to poison arms or provisions—The private property of pacific and industrious individuals, seems to be protected by the spirit of these regulations:—no army now plunders unarmed individuals ashore, except for the purpose of providing for its own subsistence; and the laws of war are thought to be violated by the seizure of private property for the sake of gain, even within the limits of the hostile territory!!* And in No. 19. p. 9, they say of the French, "*It does not occur to us that they are more deserving of moral reprobation than most other nations.*"

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Now the French have actually poisoned their own soldiers in Egypt, and massacred in cool blood their prisoners. They have plundered both the public and private property of the States of Italy, and the Cantons of Switzerland, while they promised them protection and liberty. They have plundered the private property of the inhabitants of Germany wherever they have been; nor have they considered any kind of property as free from plunder. So far from respecting private property, they have made it their booty and their prey wherever they could find or extort it. They seized upon Egypt at a time when they were at peace with the Porte, and yet this nation, in the eyes of the Edinburgh Reviewers, is not "*more deserving of moral reprobation than most other nations.*" I cannot adduce their conduct towards Spain, because the above passage was written before their system of universal dominion and oppression was laid open with respect to that country. But the French were the same in April, 1807, when it was published, that they are in 1808. The same principles actuated them; the same man governed them; the same system of plunder was pursued by them; and yet the Edinburgh Review thinks them as just as most other nations. It is a part of the French system to keep in pay writers in different countries to defend their conduct and palliate their crimes; whether the Edinburgh Reviewers

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are of this number I cannot tell from direct evidence, but their extreme anxiety to speak well of them gives great ground for suspicion. A nation, which no laws nor treaties can bind; which has trampled upon every thing held sacred among men; which is not bounded in its exertions to commit the most atrocious injuries but by its inability to commit them; which has pursued an unvaried system of universal power under all its forms of government, whether republican, directorial, consular, or imperial; this nation is, in the estimation of the Edinburgh Reviewers, as good as most other nations. A nation, which has, as a nation, avowed eternal hatred and war against all kings; which has decreed that death is an eternal sleep, and that there is no God; which has declared itself at perfect liberty to follow any plan by which it can encrease its own power and grandeur; which pursues the same plan of dethroning kings under Buonaparte, which it avowed when republican; which has unblushingly demanded bribes for treaties, nor respected any neutrality; this nation, in the eyes of the Edinburgh Review, is as good as most nations. If such an opinion does not tend to favour revolutionary principles, nothing does; it goes to justify every enormity, and make men indifferent to all public and private virtue.

In (No. 24. p. 437.) these reviewers say, with respect to her conduct towards Spain, "*France was*

was never before so plainly and entirely in the wrong as she is in the present struggle." But France has been before as plainly and entirely in the wrong, when she seized Egypt; and if they will look to to their own Review, when she trampled under foot the independence of Venice, by that very same monster of tyranny, Buonaparte, who now endeavours to subjugate Spain. But these men cannot remember the tyranny and oppressions of France; but if their own country commits a questionable action, they can state it in the strongest light, and with the highest colouring.

Of the French revolution they affirm, (No. 24. p. 277.) that the alarm respecting it in this country, "*was always excessive, and in a great degree unreasonable;*" and in (p. 321.) they call our alarms about jacobinism, and rank, and property, and French ambition, *senseless.* Now this number 24, came out *after* the conduct of France towards Spain, and yet our alarms respecting her ambition is senseless! Is not this to advocate the cause of France in all her atrocities, to endeavour to lull us into a state of insecurity, that we may become a prey to her rapacity and insatiable ambition?

Our fears of the French revolution were always reasonable; but these men call them unreasonable. We were aware of its tendency, and therefore took measures to prevent its influence upon this country.

In this country there were societies formed for the express purpose of effecting a revolution; seditious pamphlets were distributed with the greatest zeal among the bulk of the people, the army, and the navy; for Ireland a directory was formed, and a regular revolutionary agent acknowledged at Paris; the bulk of the common people were worked up into a phrensy against their governors by the arts of revolutionists; and yet these Reviewers have the barefaced impudence to say that our fears respecting the French revolution were *always excessive and unreasonable.* They must know such an opinion is false; for what reason then can they assert it, but because they are friendly to the cause of France, and lament that a revolution did not take place in Great Britain and Ireland? Are we not certain that France, if she could, would subjugate this nation? and yet our fears of her ambition are senseless, according to the Edinburgh Review. Senseless we ſhall be indeed, if we ever listen to such Reviewers, and are thrown off our watch against French ambition. Senseless indeed shall we be, if ever we permit revolutionary scribblers, as France did, to guide and direct our opinions upon politics. At the very time when France was trying every art of deceit and villainy, fraud and violence, to destroy the independence of Spain, the Edinburgh Review says of France, that our fear of her ambition is *senseless;* whatever then they may pretend to, in their

their review of Mr. Whitbread's letter to Lord Holland, it is plain how they stand affected towards France; and that her power and dominion is more the object of their wishes than the independence of their own or any other country.

In their reviews upon the state of Ireland, they make use of expressions, and avow sentiments which have a direct tendency to promote rebellion. In (No. 24. p. 350.) they speak of Ireland as advancing to a state when she will be more disposed and more able "*to resist the wrongs she suffers;*" in (p. 351.) they represent the papists as suffering *inconveniences in the performance of their religious duties,* a thing absolutely false, and in (p. 353.) they maintain that the political debasement of the lower orders in Ireland is the chief instrument in producing their peculiar ignorance, than which nothing can be more untrue.

The source of their peculiar ignorance is popery; nor will any means be sufficient to raise them to an equality of civilization and learning with the other parts of the empire, so long as popery maintains its ascendancy over them. Who is there that suffers incoveniences in the performance of his religious duties in this empire? Is there not universal liberty of conscience? But these Reviewers speak as if there was not: for what purpose then,

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but that of discord and sedition, can they broach such a sentiment? Would these *nescient* men employ some proper person to write an article now and then in their publication upon the evils of popery, they would more effectually promote the amelioration of Ireland than by endeavouring to foment division and dissatisfaction. Let it be admitted, that Ireland suffers wrongs, will a good and loyal subject tell her she will soon have strength to resist them; that is, in plain English, to dismember the empire? I do not admit that Ireland suffers wrongs; but if she did, a good subject would endeavour to find out the means of redressing them without inciting her either directly or indirectly to rebellion. He would consider the strength and internal peace of the whole empire as of more consequence than the political power and emolument of a very few men.

I have, in my first letter, exposed the abuse of the term *good* as applied to Mr. Fox by these reviewers; and in politics they are nearly as faulty in their opinion of him. "*So great a statesman*, say they, (No. 24. p. 271.) *certainly has not appeared as an author since the time of Lord Clarendon;*" and in (p. 273.) they call him, "*its* (i. e. England's) *most illustrious statesman.*" Now a much greater statesman than Mr. Fox has appeared as an author since the days of Lord Clarendon. Mr. Burke

Burke has written upon the French revolution with an intellect which will ever place him far above Mr. Fox, who admired and extolled that work of slavery, rapine, and murder. How are we to estimate the abilities of a statesman but by the correspondence of events to his opinions. Now almost every thing has happened with respect to the French revolution which Mr. Burke said would happen, but every thing has falsified Mr. Fox's declarations. But it was not convenient to the Edinburgh Reviewers to remember, that Mr. Burke had been an author; and not only so, but a much greater statesman than Mr. Fox. But what claim has he to be called England's "*most illustrious statesman?*" what are the measures of internal or external policy of any moment which owed their origin or completion to Mr. Fox? What have we, framed and carried by him, which has encreased our means of prosperity, liberty, and happiness? To call Fox England's greatest statesman, in the days of Pitt and Burke, shews either the most rooted ignorance and prejudice, or an utter contempt of truth. Have those reviewers forgot, that this *their* most illustrious statesman withdrew from parliament when the mutiny was raging at the Nore; that he bore testimony to the good character and loyalty of Arthur O'Connor at Maidstone, at the very time when he was making every exertion to sever Ireland from the empire; and that this *their* most illustri-

ous statesman, as soon as he could find an opportunity, went to France, and had several secret interviews with its present tyrant?

How is it then, my Countrymen, that these Reviewers dare thus to insult the nation; but that they are confirmed in revolutionary principles? Do not imagine that the spirit of revolution is destroyed; it is only repressed; and a few years of inattention to the arts of a set of men, falsely called philosophers, will embolden them to try if they cannot overwhelm this government as they did that of France.

But that I may prove to you still more decidedly the seditious principles of this Review, turn to No. 24, p. 399, and you will find them treating the king himself with scorn and contempt; and that on a subject altogether unconnected with politics. With scorn they mention him as the *best of sovereigns;* while those are ridiculed who have called Buonaparte the *merciless foe, the usurper*, or *the enemy of civilized society.* A loyal subject will be careful not to speak a word which may throw contempt upon his Sovereign, much more not to write one; but these men, who assume the right of directing your literary and political opinions, feel no delicacy upon that point; and they can treat their Sovereign himself with that same

scorn and contempt, for which their Review is so remarkable towards literary works in general. The king of the united kingdom has the hearts and affections of his people: they call him the best of sovereigns, because they know he deserves the appellation; but these Reviewers deride the term as applied to him, and ridicule those who give Buonaparte his true character, *a merciless foe*,

Can I then be wrong, my Countrymen, in accusing this Review of seditious and revolutionary principles,—since it endeavours to palliate and lessen French enormity, and considers it as good as most nations;—since it speaks of the affairs of Ireland in terms which tend to promote rebellion;—and since it scruples not to treat the king himself with scorn and contempt, while it ridicules those who speak of Buonaparte as he deserves.

Who these Reviewers are, I know not; I am utterly unconnected with any set of men of an opposite character. I am a volunteer in the cause against them; because I plainly see a regular system pursued by them, which, if it ever be generally adopted, will be the destruction of all religious and moral principle, as well as of real liberty and social order. You have it in your power to prevent the contagion of their vicious principles, or at least to lessen their dissemination; cease to countenance

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their publication, or to purchase it: and though it may not cure them, it will tend to prevent them from infecting others.

What I have said respecting this Review will equally apply to the Monthly. Think not their evils of small consequence; they are of the greatest moment. These men are laying regular siege to Religion, Morals, and Loyalty; it belongs to you to guard against them.

I am your very devoted Servant,

MENTOR.

Law and Gilbert, Printers, St. John's Square, Clerkenwell.